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SUBJECT: IRAN DEMARCHE TO EU MEMBER STATES AHEAD OF OCTOBER 15-16 FOREIGN MINISTERS MEETING (GAERC): UK REPLY

REF: STATE 143223

Classified By: PolMinCouns Maura Connelly, Reasons 1.4 (B) and (D)

¶1. (C/NF) Summary: London Iran Watcher (Poloff) delivered reftel nonpaper to FCO Iran Multilateral team leader Will Gelling, who said that at the GAERC HMG will be focused on autonomous sanctions only, and is confident the EU will quickly endorse this aim. Gelling added that HMG opposes trying to also obtain an explicit GAERC endorsement of a third UNSC resolution. End summary.

¶2. (C/NF) Gelling provided a draft document (for text see paragraph 4 below) which he said had been agreed upon by all EU governments as the basis for the October 15-16 ministerial discussion. Gelling said he was the actual drafter of the document but will not himself be at the GAERC.

¶3. (C/NF) Reviewing the USG non-paper, Gelling said HMG's focus, like USG, will be on having the EU endorse the concept of autonomous sanctions (i.e., outside the UN framework), and said HMG is "confident" the EU will do so at next week's GAERC. Gelling said HMG expects the only significant resistance to an endorsement of autonomous sanctions would come from Austria, which, according to Gelling, wants any EU measure to follow a third UNSCR. Gelling said HMG believes Austria is unlikely to resist for long "when it finds itself in a minority of one." Gelling said the Foreign Secretary will push back against any Austrian or other resistance by arguing that making EU action depend on a prior UNSCR would hold EU foreign policy "hostage to Russia."

¶4. (C/NF) Gelling noted pointedly that HMG disagrees with USG (point 1 in reftel non-paper's last bullet) that the objectives at the GAERC should include an EU statement endorsing a third UNSCR. Gelling said an insistence on such an endorsement would be counterproductive, by serving to broaden debate to a general discussion on Iran which may or may not produce consensus on autonomous sanctions and would in any case encourage Iran by the length and heat of the likely debate. Gelling said HMG is aiming for, and confidently expects, a short, quick, "surgically precise" EU debate on, and vote for, the concept of autonomous sanctions.

¶5. (U) (begin text of FCO's GAERC discussion document)

Draft Council Conclusions on Iran (GAERC, 15-16 October 2007)

-- The Council discussed the situation concerning Iran's nuclear programme. The Council reaffirmed its support for efforts to find a negotiated long-term solution to the Iranian nuclear issue. The Council gave its full backing to the efforts of the High Representative on behalf of the EU and the international community to encourage Iran to return to talks on long-term arrangements.

-- The Council underlined its continuing commitment to the comprehensive package proposed to Iran in June 2006. This package, among many elements, reaffirmed Iran's right to develop nuclear energy in conformity with its obligations under the NPT and included active support to build new Light Water Power Reactors using state of the art technology. Iran still has the option to re-enter negotiations on that basis, in line with the double track approach.

-- The Council welcomed the agreement between Iran and the IAEA to resolve all questions concerning Iran's past nuclear activities and noted that full and timely implementation by Iran of the IAEA work plan, as interpreted by the Director General's report, would constitute a significant step forward. As stated in the IAEA Director General's report, confidence in the exclusively peaceful nature of Iran's nuclear programme requires that the Agency be able to provide assurances regarding the absence of undeclared nuclear material and activities, through the implementation of the Additional Protocol and required transparency measures. The Council urged Iran to fully implement the provisions of the Comprehensive Safeguard Agreement, including its subsidiary arrangements, implement the Additional Protocol pending its ratification, and to provide the Agency all information and co-operation requested. Moreover, the Council expressed its hope that the Director General of the IAEA would be able to show, in his report in November, a positive outcome of his efforts in line with the requirements of the workplan agreed with Iran.

-- The Council regretted that Iran had not complied with the unanimous call of the international community to suspend all enrichment-related activity and had not accepted the offer of negotiation. The Council reaffirmed its support for Security

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Council Resolutions 1696, 1737 and 1747 and underlined that the Security Council had expressed its intention in Resolutions 1737 and 1747 to adopt further appropriate measures under Article 41, Chapter VII of the UN Charter should Iran further fail to suspend its enrichment activities. The council welcomed the 28 September statement by the foreign ministers of France, Germany, the United Kingdom, China, Russia and the United States with the support of the High Representative of the European Union. The Council agreed that the EU will consider what additional measures it might take in order to support the UN process and the shared objectives of the international community, and invited the relevant Council bodies to provide timely advice.
(end text)

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